

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 18 and 25, and add claims 26-29. Claims 1-3, 5, 7-8, 10 and 12-29 remain as follows:

1.(Previously Presented) A sound system for a motor vehicle comprising a control unit, a first input unit to operate the system, a display unit, at least one unit to generate source data that includes sound data, an amplifier unit to amplify the source data, at least one loudspeaker, a bus to link the input, display, source data and amplifier units to assure transmission of source data and to control the input, display, source data and amplifier units that are distributed over the vehicle, and at least one system unit, different from the control unit and having an associated memory in which a functional scope of this unit is stored, such that this functional scope can be transmitted over the bus, and the transmitted functional scope can be drawn upon at least partially to form the functional scope of the entire system, wherein said sound system further comprises a second input unit wherein the first and second input units have a memory in which is stored a priority value for each of the input units, that the first and second input units conduct their priority value to units connected on the bus, that the units of the system, other than the control unit, together with their associated memories form the transmitted functional scope in dependence on their priority value and conduct the formed and transmitted functional scope, via the bus, to the first and second input units with an appropriate priority value, and that the first or second input unit with this priority value draws upon the transmitted functional scopes, formed in accordance with their priority value, to form its functional scope.

2.( Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 1, wherein at least one of said first or second input units comprises a keyboard through which said priority value can be entered.

3.( Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 1, wherein said control unit automatically assigns a specific priority value to each of the first and second input units.

4.(Canceled)

5.(Currently Amended) The sound system of claim 41, wherein the control unit, one of the first or second input units, and the display unit are linked with one another in such a way that the operating menus needed to operate the system are displayed by the display unit in accordance with the functional scope of one of the first or second input units, and the system is operated via inputs to the first or second input unit, using the displays in the display unit.

6.(Canceled)

7.(Original) The sound system of claim 1, wherein said source data comprises multimedia data.

8.(Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 7, wherein turning on the sound system or an individual unit triggers the formation of the functional scopes of the first and second input units from the functional scopes of the individual units.

9.(Canceled)

10.(Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 7, wherein the formation of the functional scopes of the input units from the functional scopes of the individual units can be invoked by means of an input unit.

11.(Canceled)

12.(Previously Presented) A method of specifying functional scope of a first sound system input unit, which cooperates with at least a second sound system input unit to control multimedia data generating units that communicate with the first and second sound system input units over a system bus, said method comprising the step of:

    sending a control signal containing a priority value from the first sound system input unit to the multimedia data generating units over the system bus;

    receiving, from each of the multimedia data generating units, functional scope data indicative of the authority the first sound generating input unit has over the associated multimedia data generating unit; and

    configuring a display unit of the first sound system input unit to display control information that is indicative of the functional scope that the first sound generating input unit has been assigned.

13.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

    receiving said priority value, which is a numerical value that is input by a user through an input interface of said first sound system input unit; and

    storing said priority value in a memory device associated with the first sound system input

unit.

14.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:  
receiving said priority value from a unit for generating said priority value; and  
storing said priority value in a memory device associated with the first sound system input  
unit.

15.(Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said steps of sending, receiving and configuring are  
performed in the event the sound system is turned on, additional multimedia data generating units are  
added or removed from the unit, or the priority value is changed.

16.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein a control unit supplies data to the  
first sound system input unit and to the display unit in correspondence with the functional scope of  
the first sound system input unit, and the first sound system input unit receives command inputs  
regarding the functional scope of the input unit including command inputs associated with volume,  
bass, treble, fade and balance.

17.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein a control unit supplies control data to  
the first sound system input unit and to the display unit in correspondence with the functional scope  
of the first sound system input unit, and the first sound system input unit receives command inputs  
regarding the functional scope of the input unit including command inputs associated with the  
functions of play, track jump, repeat, fast forward, rewind, tuning, band change, silencing,  
activating/deactivating traffic messages, starting the seek function, and activating/deactivating RDS

functions.

18.(Currently Amended) A vehicle sound system that provides an audio signal to a speaker system, comprising:

    a first input unit that receives a first priority value indicative of a first scope of authority that said first input unit has been assigned over the motor vehicle sound system;

    a second input unit that receives a second priority value indicative of a second scope of authority said second input unit has been assigned over said motor vehicle sound system;

    a system bus; and

    a plurality of sound system generating components each capable of communicating with said first and second input units over said system bus and being selectively controlled by said first and second input units via said system bus.

19.(Original) The sound system of claim 18, wherein said first input unit comprises an input interface that allows a user to specify said first priority value.

20.(Original) The sound system of claim 18, further comprising means for automatically providing said first priority value and said second priority value.

21.(Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 18, wherein said first input unit comprises a display that presents information indicative of the scope of functions that may be controlled from said first input unit.

22.(Original) The sound system of claim 18, wherein said first input unit transmits said first priority value onto said system bus and said plurality of sound system generating component respond to said first input unit with their functional scope data that is associated with said first priority value.

23.(Previously Presented) The sound system of claim 22, wherein said second input unit transmits said second priority value onto said system bus and said plurality of sound system generating components to respond to said second input unit with their functional scope data associated with said second priority value.

24.(Original) The sound system of claim 22, wherein said first unit comprises a memory device that stores said first priority code and stores said functional scope data associated with said first priority value.

25.(Currently Amended) A motor vehicle multimedia sound system that provides audio signals to a speaker, said sound system comprising:

    a plurality of input units that each receive a uniquely associated priority value indicative of the a scope of authority each of said input units has been assigned over the motor vehicle sound system; and

    a system bus; and

    a plurality of audio generating components each capable of communicating with said plurality of input units over said system bus and being selectively controlled by said plurality of input units.

26.(New) The sound system of claim 25, wherein said plurality of input units comprises a first

input unit that is accessible to occupants of a front seat of a motor vehicle, and said first input unit includes an input interface that allows a user to specify a first priority value associated with said first input unit.

27.(New) The sound system of claim 25, wherein said plurality of input units comprises a first input unit including a display that presents information indicative of the scope of functions that may be controlled from said first input unit.

28.(New) The sound system of claim 25, wherein said plurality of input units comprises a first input unit that transmits a first priority value onto said system bus and said plurality of audio generating component respond to said first input unit with their functional scope data that is associated with said first priority value.

29.(New) The sound system of claim 28, wherein said plurality of input units comprises a second input unit that is accessible to occupants of a rear seat of a motor vehicle, wherein said second input unit transmits a second priority value onto said system bus and said plurality of audio generating components respond to said second input unit with their functional scope data associated with said second priority value.